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RR RUEHBZ RUEHGI RUEHJO RUEHMR RUEHRN
DE RUEHKI #0781 2660633
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 220633Z SEP 08
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8462
RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 0222
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 1480
INFO RUCNSAD/SADC COLLECTIVE
RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE

UNCLAS KINSHASA 000781

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE PASS DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION
USAID FOR OFDA: MSHIRLEY and AFR/EA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: FAIR ECON PGOV CG

SUBJECT: GDRC INVITES NTSB TO ASSIST WITH AIR SERV
CRASH INVESTIGATION

REF: (A) KINSHASA 725;
(B) KINSHASA 349
(C) KINSHASA 367

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The GDRC Civil Aviation Authority (AAC) extended an invitation verbally through Econoff for the NTSB to assist in the investigation of the September 1 AirServ crash near Bukavu (Ref A). The NTSB investigator hopes to bring the Flight Data Recorder back to the U.S. for analysis as the first step in the investigation. The AAC is also currently hosting a conference to draft proposals for updated legislation to civil aviation code in the DRC. End Summary.

¶2. (U) The Director of the GDRC Civil Aviation Authority (AAC), Richard Nyanguile, told Econoff on September 17 that the NTSB investigator has been invited to assist in the September 1 Air Serv crash investigation. The investigator that has been named the NTSB's U.S. Accredited Representative, and who is currently in Nairobi, also assisted with the April 15 Hewa Bora crash (Refs B and C). He expects to arrive in Kinshasa the week of September 22, and hopes to begin the investigation by transferring the Flight Data Recorder (FDR) to the NTSB for analysis. Nyanguile said he agrees with the NTSB's plan of action and that the FDR is currently in Kinshasa.

¶3. (SBU) The 19-seat Beechcraft 1900 had crashed on a steep slope near Bukavu, making access to the crash site difficult. UN peacekeepers finally reached the site on September 4 by getting lowered from helicopters in slings. The peacekeepers helped to evacuate all seventeen bodies and successfully recovered the FDR. The AAC waited two weeks before inviting the NTSB, a sign the GDRC may be wary of any reports that could further damage the DRC's already poor aviation safety record.

¶4. (SBU) Nyanguile is currently hosting a conference September 18-19 to work on proposed legislation to update the Congolese civil aviation code. Nyanguile said the DRC is using obsolete aviation laws inherited from the colonial era. The NTSB investigator will have the opportunity to share his views on the outcome of this conference when he meets with the AAC.

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